

## The End and The Beginning



The most cheerful greetings to all and exuberant congratulations to the Class of 2006! What a wonderful day to be alive! Huh? I am so happy to be here and witness this exciting time with you –your graduation. Yippee! Grad—u—ation!

I almost know how

you feel. You see, I too, graduated G.E. D. class. The difference is, I did not have a rewarding and meaningful ceremony like you are having today. And, my teacher was not Pam Beahan, who is going the extra mile and making this ceremony possible for you. I know, first-hand, how very special she is because she continues to further my education in grammar and writing every other Thursday at a writer's meeting. So, you see, I, too, have been blessed with her talents and unlimited, unselfish kindnesses. I know how she never leaves one page, shall we say, unturned. More than leaving one under-taught, she's more likely to leave one over-taught; that's how she is. You get your money's worth with her!

It's always one thing or another that keeps people from graduating with their Senior class, isn't it? In my case, I was young and in love, and I got married in January, and we moved out of state. I remember my mother telling me when we left to try to finish my high school education and get my diploma. I promised her I would. But, things happen, don't they?

I probably wasn't married a month when Mom mailed me one of those folding match books. On its inside was an ad encouraging me to earn my high school diploma through the mail. Do you know what? We hardly had food to eat, let alone enough money for me to take that correspondence course. That really made

me feel badly. It made me feel guilty because I had never been one to break a promise. At that time, and long after, it seemed an impossible dream for me to realize, but the hope was always there.

I'm sure all of us can *now* advise others not to procrastinate something so important. It was important to me.

You know what? Twenty or twenty-five years passed, and I still did not have my diploma. I believe, I thought for a long time that we were too poor to worry about it, but I wanted my diploma. It even came to the point that my mother passed away, and I still hadn't graduated high school. I felt I'd failed her and myself.

Finally, about 1980, long after we'd moved back to Missouri, my husband and I had moved to Jefferson county, and we saw an ad in the paper that offered a G.E.D. course, and the two of us signed up. There was a chance to keep my promise. Could I do it? It was a night class that we attended once or twice a week. Just the idea of trying to pass a G.E.D. test scared me silly. I really worried about Algebra, which, for some reason, I'd never been offered in my high school days.

On May the ninth- I think it was my forty-third birthday- our test results arrived. My husband came in, handed me the unfolded papers and said, "Happy Birthday"!

I was so nervous I said, "I see the papers, but did we pass? Did we pass"? He said, "My lands, it's written all across the top of the paper in big letters! Can't you read"?

I had *passed*! It had been a big mountain for me to climb, ;but as it's been said: It surely was worth the climb. At that time, I felt that my deceased mother were celebrating with me. I felt that I definitely had a brain again. I had made it up this mountain, and I would make it up more mountains. Once more I had confidence in myself, and I could be somebody. I was so happy. I HAD MY DIPLOMA,

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and I had kept my promise to my mother.

I heard someone say on TV this month that a career is more than making money. There's a spiritual side to it, too. They said to imagine you're telling a story to your grandchildren, and ask yourself what would you want your story to be. I think it can be anything we want it to be. *We* can make it happen, *We* are in charge. *We* can climb another mountain, and another, until our story is as beautiful as we want it to be, one that we can one day relate to our grandchildren with pleasure, and be not ashamed.

Believe me when I say, I truly am full of joy for you today and this most noteworthy accomplishment. God's blessings upon you every day and the story you'll be living and relating to your grandchildren with joy.

*This speech was given on May 19, 2006 to the GED graduates at Jefferson College by GED Instructor, Pam Beahan.*

## NCSALL News

Accelerated growth in reading has been documented with older adolescents reading at the 4th to 8th grade level, using an approach developed at Girls and Boys Town. (See <http://www.ncsall.net/?id=466> "Reversing reading failure in young adults" in Focus on Basics, 1:B, for more on the model). NCSALL researchers, John Strucker, Mary E. Curtis, and Marilyn Jager Adams, adapted this approach for use by adult intermediate readers, and refer to the adaptation as Adult Fluency and Vocabulary. This research represents the first systematic attempt to assess the program. Because lack of practice time is a persistent problem for ABE students, the effectiveness of Soliloquy Learning's Reading Assistant, a speech recognition reading tutor, is also being evaluated as a means of providing distributed practice in fluency and vocabulary (for more on Soliloquy Learning, see <http://www.soliloquylearning.com/index.html>).

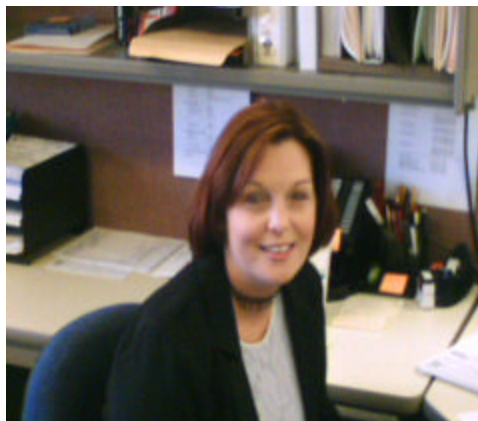
The researchers are using a quasi-experimental longitudinal research design in which 24 intermediate ABE classes (totaling about 300 learners) were randomly assigned to one of four instructional conditions at seven sites in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire. The study lasted only one semester to minimize the effects of student dropouts, which occurred at an acceptable rate of about 25 percent. The four instructional conditions are: Adult Fluency and Vocabulary and Reading Assistant practice; Adult Fluency and Vocabulary and hard copy practice (same texts as used by the Reading Assistant); traditional curriculum and Reading Assistant practice; traditional curriculum and hard copy practice (same texts as used by the Reading Assistant).

*This article was submitted to the Show Me Literacy Newsletter Editor by NCSALL for publication.*

*"The need to act  
overwhelms any willingness  
people have to learn"*

Peter Schwartz

## New Secretary Joins DESE-AEL



Jennifer Clemons recently joined the staff at DESE-AEL as an Administrative Assistant and is responsible for a variety of aspects in the daily operations of the section.

Primary responsibilities include maintaining the dropout database and corresponding with those students about adult classes available to them. She also prepares department purchase requisitions, records monthly expense reports and maintains AEL itineraries and supplies.

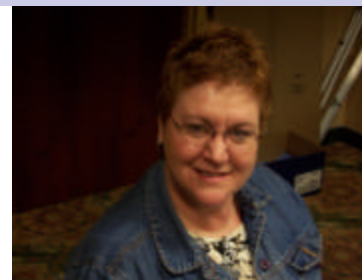
Clemons's prior work experience has been Office Manager/Executive Assistant for the Missouri State Chiropractors Association in Jefferson City and Office Administrator for the Regional Manager of AFLAC in Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

"I believe adult education is the key to a successful career. This enables a higher standard of living," says Jennifer who obtained her GED and then her Associates Degree in Business Management/Computer Specialist from Metro Business College. Achieving her Bachelor's Degree via online courses is Jennifer's next goal.

Originally from Jackson, Missouri, Clemons moved to Jefferson City in the fall of 2004 with husband Chris who works for a local manufacturing company. Jennifer and her husband have two daughters, Taelyn age 9 and Tristyn age 4 months. Jennifer also has a 12 year old stepson, Quyn.

In her spare time, Jennifer enjoys reading, sewing and playing with her children. Jennifer is excited about the opportunity to meet new people and establish friendships while working in the AEL section.

## Technology Corner



## Personalizing the BTAP

For Immediate Release

November 27, 2006

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For the newer teachers in Adult Education and Family Literacy in Missouri, the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program (BTAP) is the second requirement for certification. The BTAP is presented and sponsored by the MO AEL Professional Development Center, North Central Missouri College, Trenton.

The BTAP offers more classroom management information and teaching strategies. Teachers who attend have had some AEL classroom experience since attending the Pre Certification Workshop. Many times "situations" come up from which teachers are looking for suggestions or answers. One of the new sessions added to the BTAP in 2006 is "Personalizing the Workshop."

This session allows teachers to ask questions or ask for suggestions for classroom situations. When teachers arrive at the workshop, they are given paper where they can write their questions. The teachers mark if they are an AEL or an ESL teacher. The presenters find time at the end of the day to go through the list of questions and decide if the situation was covered during the first day presentation. Then at the end of the second day, an hour is used to cover the questions which haven't been answered during the presentation. Some of the questions need more time to discuss. This session personalizes the workshop for each teacher and allows a sharing time between teachers. If a question cannot be answered by the presenters, they will find the answer and get back with the teacher at a later date.

# Parkway Program Receives National Recognition for Work with Volunteers

Parkway Area Adult Education and Literacy's success in involving volunteers to supplement the work of paid teachers in English-as-a-second-language (ESL) classes has earned it a role in a national project funded by The UPS Foundation and ProLiteracy America, the U.S. program of ProLiteracy Worldwide.

During the next 18 months, Parkway Area Adult Education and nine other adult education and literacy programs will share their exemplary experiences to create a promising practices guide that will help publicly-funded adult education programs recruit, manage, and support volunteers. The guide will be distributed nationally.

"Adult education programs are being asked to serve greater numbers of low-level ESL students than ever before, and they are looking for strategies to help serve those adults who need to learn to understand, speak, read, and write English," said Peter Waite, executive director of ProLiteracy America. He pointed out that many adults spend months waiting for service and often are placed in large classes where they can't get the individualized practice they need to help them find and keep a job; communicate with their children's schools; or do everyday tasks such as shop for groceries, take public transportation, or seek medical assistance.

"Volunteers have long played a key role in adult education through their work with community-based organizations that provide services almost exclusively through volunteers. In addition, programs such as Parkway Adult Education are proving that the combination of paid staff and volunteers working together as a team can make a significant difference in publicly-funded programs," Waite noted.

Parkway Area Adult Education and Literacy provides free GED/Basic skills and English as a Second Language classes to adults ages 16 and over. The federally and state funded program has over 42 locations in the school districts of Parkway, Pattonville, Hazelwood, Maplewood-Richmond Heights, Brentwood, Clayton and Ladue. The program serves over 4,000 students per year and earns funding based on students served and measured performance gains of those students.

ProLiteracy America is the U.S. program of ProLiteracy Worldwide, the world's largest organization of adult literacy programs. ProLiteracy represents 1,200 local program affiliates in all 50 states and 120 partner programs in 62 developing countries and provides them with the training, technical assistance, materials, and other support they need to provide one-on-one, small group, and classroom instruction in literacy and English as a second language to adults and their families. These affiliates and partners work with more than 350,000 adult literacy students each year.

ProLiteracy Worldwide has its headquarters in Syracuse, N.Y. For more information, please visit [www.proliteracy.org](http://www.proliteracy.org).

The UPS Foundation develops and champions innovative solutions to social problems. It focuses its support on hunger, literacy, and volunteerism.

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# Understanding and Working with Students and Adults from Poverty

**By Ruby K. Payne, Ph.D.**

*Founder and President of aha! Process, Inc.*

*This article was taken from the aha! Process, Inc. website at [www.ahaprocess.com](http://www.ahaprocess.com).*

Although this article was originally written for teachers, the information presented may be of help to those who are working with persons making the transition from welfare to work. To understand and work with students and adults from generational poverty, a framework is needed. This analytical framework is shaped around these basic ideas:

- Each individual has eight resources which greatly influence achievement; money is only one.
- Poverty is the extent to which an individual is without these eight resources.
- The hidden rules of the middle class govern schools and work; students from generational poverty come with a completely different set of hidden rules and do not know middleclass hidden rules.
- Language issues and the story structure of casual register cause many students from generational poverty to be unmediated, and therefore, the cognitive structures needed inside the mind to learn at the levels required by state tests have not been fully developed.
- Teaching is what happens outside the head; learning is what happens inside the head. For these students to learn, direct teaching must occur to build these cognitive structures.
- Relationships are the key motivators for learning for students from generational poverty.

## Key points

Here are some key points that need to be addressed before discussing the framework:

**Poverty is relative.** If everyone around

you has similar circumstances, the notion of poverty and wealth is vague. Poverty or wealth only exists in relationship to the known quantities or expectation.

**Poverty occurs among people of all ethnic backgrounds and in all countries.**

The notion of a middle class as a large segment of society is a phenomenon of this century. The percentage of the population that is poor is subject to definition and circumstance.

**Economic class is a continuous line, not a clear-cut distinction.**

Individuals move and are stationed all along the continuum of income.

**Generational poverty and situational poverty are different.**

Generational poverty is defined as being in poverty for two generations or longer. Situational poverty exists for a shorter time is caused by circumstances like death, illness, or divorce.

**This framework is based on patterns. All patterns have exceptions. An individual bring with they were raised.**

Even though the income of the individual may rise significantly, many patterns of thought, social interaction, cognitive strategies, and so on remain with the individual.

**School and businesses operate from middle-class norms and use the hidden rules of the middle class.**

These norms and hidden rules are never directly taught in schools or in businesses.

**We must understand our students' hidden rules and teach them the hidden middle-class rules that will make them successful at school and work.** We can neither excuse them nor scold them for not knowing; we must teach them and provide support, insistence, and expectations.

**To move from poverty to middle class or from middle class to wealth, an individual must give up relationships for achievement.**

**Resources:** Poverty is defined as the "extent to which an individual does without resources.

These are the resources that influence

achievement:

**Financial:** the money to purchase goods and services.

**Emotional:** the ability to choose and control emotional responses, particularly to negative situations, without engaging in self-destructive behavior. This is an internal resource and shows itself through stamina, perseverance, and choices.

**Mental:** the necessary intellectual ability and acquired skills, such as reading, writing, and computing, to deal with everyday life.

**Spiritual:** a belief in divine purpose and guidance.

**Physical:** health and mobility.

**Support systems:** friends, family, backup resources and knowledge bases one can rely on in times of need. These are external resources.

**Role models:** frequent access to adults who are appropriate and nurturing to the child, and who do not engage in self-destructive behavior.

**Knowledge of hidden rules:** knowing the unspoken cues and habits of a group.

**Language and story structure:** To understand students and adults who come from a background of generational poverty, it's helpful be acquainted with the five registers of language. These are frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate. Formal register is standard business and educational language. Formal register is characterized by complete sentences and specific word choice.

Casual register is characterized by a 400- to 500-word vocabulary, broken sentences, and many non-verbal assists.

Maria Montano-Harmon, a California researcher, has found that many low-income students know only casual register. Many discipline referrals occur because the student has spoken in casual register. When individuals have no access to the structure and specificity of formal register, their achievement lags. This is complicated by the story structure used in casual register.

In formal register, the story structure

Continued on page 5



focuses on plot, has a beginning and end, and weaves sequence, cause and effect, characters, and consequences into the plot. In casual register, the focus of the story is characterization.

Typically, the story starts at the end (Joey busted his nose), proceeds with short vignettes interspersed with participatory comments from the audience (He hit him hard. BAMBAM. You should've seen the blood on him), and finishes with a comment about the character. (To see this in action, watch a TV talk show where many of the participants use this structure.) The story elements that are included are those with emotional significance for the teller. This is an episodic, random approach with many omissions. It does not include sequence, cause and effect, or consequence.

### Cognitive issues

The cognitive research indicates that early memory is linked to the predominant story structure that an individual knows. Furthermore, stories are retained in the mind longer than many other memory patterns for adults. Consequently, if a person has not had access to a story structure with cause and effect, consequence, and sequence, and lives in an environment where routine and structure are not available, he or she cannot plan. According to Reuven Feuerstein, an Israeli educator:

- ? Individuals who cannot plan, cannot predict.
- ? If they cannot predict, they cannot identify cause and effect.
- ? If they cannot identify cause and effect, they cannot identify consequence.
- ? If they cannot identify consequence, they cannot control impulsivity.
- ? If they cannot control impulsivity, they have an inclination to criminal behavior.

### Mediation

Feuerstein refers to these students as "unmediated." Simply explained mediation happens when an adult makes a deliberate intervention and does three things:

- ? points out the stimulus (what needs to be paid attention to)
- ? gives the stimulus meaning
- ? provides a strategy to deal with the stimulus.

For example: Don't cross the street without looking (stimulus). You could be killed (meaning). Look twice both ways before crossing (strategy).

Mediation builds cognitive strategies for the mind. The strategies are analogous to the infrastructure of a house, that is, the plumbing, electrical and heating systems. When cognitive strategies are only partially in place, the mind can only partially accept the teaching. According to Feuerstein, unmediated students may miss as much as 50 percent of text on a page.

Why are so many students unmediated? Poverty forces one's time to be spent on survival. Many students from poverty live in single-parent families. When there is only one parent, he or she does not have time and energy to both mediate the children and work to put food on the table. And if the parent is non-mediated, his or her ability to mediate the children will be significantly lessened.

To help students learn when they are only partially mediated, four structures must be built as part of direct teaching:

- ? the structure of the discipline,
- ? cognitive strategies,
- ? conceptual frameworks, and
- ? models for sorting out what is important from what is unimportant in text.

### Hidden rules

One key resource for success in school and at work is an understanding of the hidden rules. Hidden rules are the unspoken cueing system that individuals use to indicate membership in a group. One of the most important middle-class rules is that work and achievement tend to be the driving forces in decision-making. In generational poverty, the driving forces are survival, entertainment, and relationships. This is why a student may have a \$30 Halloween costume but an unpaid book bill.

Hidden rules shape what happens at school. For example, if the rule a student brings to school is to laugh when disciplined and he does so, the teacher is probably going to be offended. Yet for the student, this is the appropriate way to deal with the situation. The recommended approach is simply to teach the student that he needs a set of rules that brings success in school and at work and a different set that brings success outside of school. So, for example, if an

employee laughs at a boss when being disciplined, he will probably be fired.

Many of the greatest frustrations teachers and administrators have with students from poverty is related to knowledge of the hidden rules. These students simply do not know middleclass hidden rules nor do most educators know the hidden rules of generational poverty.

To be successful, students must be given the opportunity to learn these rules. If they choose not to use them, that is their choice. But how can they make the choice if they don't know the rules exist?

### Relationships are key

When individuals who made it out of poverty are interviewed, virtually all cite an individual who made a significant difference for them. Not only must the relationship be present, but tasks need to be referenced in terms of relationships.

For example, rather than talk about going to college, the conversation needs to be about how the learning will impact relationships. One teacher had this conversation with a 17-year-old student who didn't do his math homework on positive and negative numbers.

"Well," she said, "I guess it will be all right with you when your friends cheat you at cards. You won't know whether they're cheating you or not because you don't know positive and negative numbers, and they aren't going to let you keep score, either." He then used a deck of cards to show her that he knew how to keep score. So she told him, "Then you know positive and negative numbers. I expect you to do your homework."

From that time on, he did his homework and kept an A average. The teacher simply couched the importance of the task according to the student's relationships.

### Conclusion

Students from generational poverty need direct teaching to build cognitive structures necessary for learning. The relationships that will motivate them need to be established. The hidden rules must be taught so they can choose the appropriate responses if they desire. Students from poverty are no less capable or intelligent. They simply have not been mediated in the strategies or hidden rules that contribute to success in school and at work.

# Hidden Class Rules

## Generational Poverty

## Middle Class

## Wealth

The driving forces for decision-making are survival, relationships, and entertainment.

The driving forces for decision-making are work and achievement.

The driving forces for decision-making are social, financial, and political.

People are possessions. It is worse to steal someone's girlfriend than a thing. A relationship is valued over achievement. That's why you must defend your child no matter what he or she has done. Too much education is feared because the

Things are possessions. If material security is threatened, often the relationship is broken.

Legacies, one-of-a-kind objects, and pedigrees are possessions.

The "world" is defined in local terms.

The "world" is defined in national terms.

The "world" is defined in international terms.

Physical fighting is how conflict is resolved. If you only know casual register, you don't have the words to negotiate a resolution. Respect is accorded to those who can physically defend themselves.

Fighting is done verbally. Physical fighting is viewed with distaste.

Fighting is done through social inclusion/exclusion and through lawyers.

Food is valued for its quantity.

Food is valued for its quality.

Food is valued for its presentation

## Other Rules

? You laugh when you are disciplined; it is a way to save face.  
 ? The noise level is higher, nonverbal information is more important than verbal. Emotions are openly displayed, and the value of personality to the group is your ability to entertain.  
 ? Destiny and fate govern. The notion of having choices is foreign. Discipline is about penance and forgiveness, not change.  
 ? Tools are often not available. Therefore, the concepts of repair and fixing may not be present.

? Formal register is always used in an interview and is often an expected part of social interaction.  
 ? Work is a daily part of life.  
 ? Discipline is about changing behavior. To stay in the middle class, one must be self-governing and self-supporting.  
 ? A reprimand is taken seriously (at least the pretense is there), without smiling and with some deference to authority.  
 ? Choice is a key concept in the lifestyle. The future is very important. Formal education is seen as crucial for future success.

? The artistic and aesthetic are key to the lifestyle and included clothing, art, interior design, seasonal decorating, food, music, social activities, etc.  
 ? For reasons of security and safety, virtually all contacts dependent on connection and introductions.  
 ? Education is for the purpose of social, financial and political connections, as well as to enhance the artistic and aesthetic.  
 \* One of the key differences between the well-to-do and the wealthy is that the wealthy almost always are patrons to the arts and often have an individual artist(s) to whom they are patrons as well.

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**Ruby K. Payne, Ph.D.**, founder and president of **aha! Process, Inc.** (1994), with more than 30 years experience as a professional educator, has been sharing her insights about the impact of poverty – and how to help educators and other professionals work effectively with individuals from poverty – in more than a thousand workshop settings through North America, Canada, and Australia.

More information on her book, *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, can be found on her website, [www.ahaprocess.com](http://www.ahaprocess.com)

**Editor's note: Ruby K. Payne** presents

*A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, a two-day workshop, on her U.S. National tour each year and also has produced accompanying materials. Both are available on her website, [www.ahaprocess.com](http://www.ahaprocess.com). Also opt-in to **aha!**'s e-mail news list for the latest poverty and income statistics [free] and other updates.

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## Upcoming PDC Schedule

PCW 2006	December 1-2,
PCW 2007	January 20-21,
PCW 2007	February 10-11,
BTAP	March 24-25, 2007
PCW	May 5-6, 2007

## Send Us Your Success Stories!

Does your program have a success story to share? Show-Me Literacy newsletter editor, Nancy Eads, is looking for program “success stories”-- whether it be about students, instructors, overall program

achievement, or other things you would like to share with readers. “AEL programs see successes almost on a daily basis. This is a great opportunity for program directors to spotlight volunteers, teachers as well as student stories.

The deadline for submissions will be the 15th each month and can be emailed to: [neads@rolla.k12.mo.us](mailto:neads@rolla.k12.mo.us)

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